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Prevention of armed conflict

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Strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution

The General Assembly,

Guided by the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming its commitment to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States,

Recalling Chapter VI, including paragraph 1 of Article 33, of the Charter of the United Nations, and other articles of the Charter relevant to mediation,

Bearing in mind its responsibilities, functions and powers under the Charter of the United Nations, and thus recalling all its relevant resolutions in matters related to the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution, including through mediation,

Reaffirming its commitment to uphold the sovereign equality of all States, respect for their territorial integrity and political independence and the duty of Member States to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations, and to uphold the resolution of disputes by peaceful means and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, the right to self-determination of peoples which remain under colonial domination or foreign occupation, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for the equal rights of all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, international cooperation in solving

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international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character and the fulfilment in good faith of the obligations assumed in accordance with the Charter,

Bearing in mind that armed and other types of conflicts and terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, and hostage-taking still persist in many parts of the world,

Recalling its resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003 on the prevention of armed conflict and the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[1] which recognizes the important role of the good offices of the Secretary-General, including in the mediation of disputes, and which supports the efforts of the Secretary-General in strengthening his capacity in this area,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General of 8 April 2009 on enhancing mediation and its support activities,[2]

Reaffirming the respective role and authority of the General Assembly and the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling all relevant General Assembly resolutions and Security Council presidential statements related to mediation,

Recognizing the growing interest in and the provision of mediation, and its use as a promising and cost-effective tool in the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution, without prejudice to other means mentioned in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, including the use of arbitration and the roles and functions of the International Court of Justice,

Recognizing also the useful role that mediation can play in preventing disputes from escalating into conflicts and conflicts from escalating further, as well as in advancing the resolution of conflicts and thus preventing and/or reducing human suffering and creating conditions conducive to lasting peace and sustainable development, and in this regard, recognizing that peace and development are mutually reinforcing,

Emphasizing that justice is a fundamental building block of sustainable peace,

Reaffirming its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which are indispensable foundations of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world, and reiterating its determination to foster strict respect for them and to establish a just and lasting peace all over the world,

Recalling that the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including through mediation, remain a primary responsibility of Member States without prejudice to Article 36 of the Charter of the United Nations,

Stressing the importance of mediation activities in peacebuilding and recovery processes, in particular in preventing post-conflict countries from relapsing into conflict, and in this regard, recognizing the advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission in supporting peace efforts in countries on its agenda,

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[1] See resolution 60/1.

[2] S/2009/189.

Recalling the good offices of the Secretary-General and his efforts, through the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat and its Mediation Support Unit, to develop United Nations mediation capacities in accordance with agreed mandates,

Reaffirming the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security as set out in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and taking note of their important role as mediators, in many regions, acting with the consent of parties to a particular dispute or conflict,

Recognizing national and civil society actors active in mediation, and encouraging their contributions, when appropriate, in this regard,

Recognizing also the necessity for cooperation and coordination among the actors involved in a specific mediation context, as well as the need to build capacity for mediation activities,

Welcoming different initiatives for mediation, including the mediation for peace initiative, as a step towards strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of and disputes, conflict prevention and resolution,

Recognizing the importance of the full and effective participation of women at all levels, at all stages and in all aspects of the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution, as well as the provision of adequate gender expertise for all mediators and their teams, noting that further efforts are necessary to address the lack of women as chief or lead peace mediators, and in this context, reaffirming the full and effective implementation of all relevant United Nations resolutions and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[3] and furthermore, welcoming the role of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in this respect,

1. *Reiterates* that all Member States should strictly adhere to their obligations as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, including in the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution;

2. *Invites* Member States, as appropriate, to optimize the use of mediation and other tools mentioned in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations for the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution;

3. *Welcomes* the contributions of Member States to mediation efforts, as appropriate, and encourages them, where appropriate, to develop national mediation capacities, as applicable, in order to ensure coherent mediation and responsiveness;

4. *Encourages* Member States, in this regard, to promote equal, full and effective participation of women in all forums and at all levels of the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution, particularly the decision-making level;

5. *Also encourages* Member States, as appropriate, to use the mediation capacities of the United Nations as well as those of regional and subregional organizations, where applicable, and to promote mediation in their bilateral and multilateral relations,

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[3] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

6. *Invites* all Member States to consider providing timely and adequate resources for mediation, in order to assure its success, as well as for mediation capacity-building activities of the United Nations and of regional and subregional organizations, with a view to ensuring the sustainability and predictability of all catalytic resources;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to offer good offices, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and relevant United Nations resolutions, and to continue to provide mediation support, where appropriate, to special representatives and envoys of the United Nations and to enhance partnerships with regional and subregional organizations, as well as Member States;

8. *Stresses* the importance of well-trained, impartial, experienced and geographically diverse mediation process and substance experts at all levels to ensure the timely and highest quality support to mediation efforts, supports the efforts of the Secretary-General in maintaining an updated roster of mediators, and encourages the continuing efforts to improve its gender balance and equitable geographical representation;

9. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to appoint women as chief or lead mediators in United Nations-sponsored peace processes, as well as to ensure adequate gender expertise for all United Nations processes;

10. *Recommends* that the Secretary-General, in accordance with mandates agreed upon by Member States, continue to strengthen the mediation capacities of the United Nations system, in particular the Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political Affairs, and its responsiveness, in accordance with agreed mandates and fully taking into account existing United Nations activities and structures, including in the fields of rule of law and accountability, so as to avoid duplication;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States and other relevant actors, to develop guidance for more effective mediation, taking into account, inter alia, lessons learned from past and ongoing mediation processes;

12. *Recognizes* that responsible and credible mediation requires, inter alia, the consent of parties to a particular dispute or conflict, the impartiality of the mediators, their compliance with agreed mandates, respect for national sovereignty, compliance with obligations of States and other relevant actors under international law, including applicable treaties, and the operational preparedness, including process and substantive expertise, of the mediators;

13. *Welcomes* the efforts of the Secretary-General to assist Member States and relevant regional and subregional organizations, upon request, in mediation capacity-building for the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution, and calls upon the Secretary-General to continue these efforts, in accordance with agreed mandates;

14. *Stresses* the importance of partnerships and cooperation of international, regional and subregional organizations with the United Nations, with each other and with civil society, and of developing mechanisms to improve information-sharing, cooperation and coordination in order to ensure the coherence and complementarity of efforts of actors involved in a specific mediation context;

15. *Invites* relevant international, regional and subregional organizations as well as civil society to develop mediation capacities and structures, as appropriate, as well as resource mobilization, and encourages them to follow United Nations guidance for effective mediation;

16. *Welcomes* the efforts of the African Union in developing its mediation capacities and structures, in particular its early warning assessment systems and prevention and response capabilities;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the present resolution for consideration by Member States at the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly and to include the views of Member States and other relevant actors as well as guidance for more effective mediation as an annex to the report, and requests the Secretary-General to hold regular briefings on this issue in order to promote closer consultation with Member States and increase transparency;

18. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-sixth session, under the item entitled "Prevention of armed conflict" a sub-item entitled "Strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution".